

of the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center.

Oklahomans were not alone in recognizing his talents, as he was subsequently promoted to three-star rank and assigned as Director for Operations for the Pentagon's Joint Staff—the highest ranking operations staff officer of our country's Armed Forces.

Finally, in 1988, he was appointed to command the Strategic Air Command's prestigious 15th Air Force, a position he held until his retirement from active military service in 1990.

In addition to the impressive combat record I have already mentioned, I would note that General Burpee's military files reflect an outstanding total of 11,000 flying hours as well as the award of the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, two Distinguished Service Medals, and the Legion of Merit. A true warrior and leader, indeed.

Dick Burpee, however, is not a person who considers even 35 years of arduous service a full working career. Following his retirement, he started a successful consulting business in management and marketing with aerospace industries and government. Since relocating to Oklahoma City in 1991, he has served as vice president for development and vice president of administration at the University of Central Oklahoma, sits on the board of directors of the United Bank in Oklahoma City, and has been deeply involved with the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce. Elected to the board of directors of the Retired Officers Association (TROA) in 1992, he was unanimously selected as TROA's chairman of the board in 1996, a position from which he is now retiring.

Through his stewardship, the Retired Officers Association continues to play a vital role as a staunch advocate of legislative initiatives to maintain readiness and improve the quality of life for all members of the uniformed service community—active, reserve and retired, plus their families and survivors.

I won't describe all of his accomplishments, but will briefly touch on some highlights to illustrate his involvement and concern for military people. As chairman, he has championed the fight for health care equity for retirees of the uniformed services, whose access to the military health care system has been severely curtailed by base closures, downsizing, and shrinking military medical budgets. His persistent and well-reasoned proposals have translated into successful legislative initiatives aimed at expanding Medicare-eligible retirees' access to military facilities and allowing them to enroll in the federal employees health benefits program. He also has been one of the most vocal advocates for ending the practice of capping annual pay raises for active and reserve personnel below those enjoyed by the average American. Happily, those efforts are now bearing fruit in the form of full-comparability raises for the

troops in 1999 and, hopefully, from 2000 on.

Taken together, these comprise two of the most important institutional inducements to help reverse declining career retention statistics in all services.

In forcefully articulating the urgency of honoring long-standing health care and retirement commitments to those who have already served and by championing improved quality-of-life initiatives for those now serving, Dick Burpee has significantly raised Congress' sensitivity to these important retention and readiness issues.

Perhaps most importantly, Dick Burpee has distinguished himself and TROA from other, often strident, critics by consistently offering cogent, well-researched plans that outline workable legislative solutions to these complex problems.

My closing observation, with which I am sure you will all agree, is that General Dick Burpee has been, in every sense of the word, a leader in the military, TROA and the entire retired community. Our very best wishes go with him for long life, well-earned happiness, and continued success in service to his Nation and the uniformed servicemembers whom he has so admirably led.

As a former soldier myself, who entered military service at about the same time he did, I offer General Burpee a grateful and heartfelt salute. ●

“MEMORIES AND MIRACLES”

● Mr. MOYNIHAN. Mr. President, I rise to commend to the Senate the stirring tale of Jack Ratz, a New Yorker who recently published a remarkable book, *Endless Miracles*. Mr. Ratz, who resides with his wife, Doris, in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Mill Basin, is one of the last survivors of the flourishing Jewish community of Latvia, which lost all but 300 of its 35,000 members during the Holocaust.

Jack Ratz's memoirs is an eloquent refutation to those who would dare to trivialize, distort, or even deny the Holocaust's important lessons. His book well reflects the affirmative message that Jack Ratz shares with New York City school children during his regular visits to the city classrooms.

As the survivors of the Holocaust succumb to old age there are fewer and fewer eyewitnesses to this tragedy. Jack Ratz has provided an invaluable service with his moving account of the Latvian Holocaust experience.

I ask to have printed in the RECORD a recent article in the New York City Jewish Week about Jack Ratz and “Endless Miracles.”

The article follows:

[From the Jewish Week, Aug. 14, 1998]

MEMORIES AND MIRACLES

(By Nancy Beiles)

During a recent trip to Riga, Latvia, Jack Ratz visited a museum commemorating Latvian Holocaust victims, and was drawn to a series of photos of camp inmates hanging on the wall. One in particular caught his atten-

tion—a black-and-white photo of a 16-year-old boy, head shaven, wearing work clothes decorated with the Star of David and the number 281.

“I asked the guard, ‘Who are those people?’ He said, ‘they died a long time ago,’ recalled Ratz, of Mill Basin, a Latvian-born Holocaust survivor. “I told him I know three of those people. Two were father and son and yes, they were killed. But the photo of the young fellow on the right—he is talking to you. He is me.”

Ratz had come to Riga to say Kaddish for members of his family killed in the Rumboli Forest in 1941, and to visit the old ghetto where he and his father lived before being sent off to a series of work and concentration camps.

“All of a sudden I saw a picture of myself hanging on the wall and a flash of memories came rushing back to me of 55 years ago,” Ratz recalls, tearfully. “I could only cry. I found myself hanging on the wall with all the dead people.”

Of the 35,000 Jews who lived in Latvia at the time of German occupation in 1941, Ratz is one of just 300 who survived. Because of the scarcity of Latvian survivors, their particular experience during the Holocaust is rarely recounted. “Very few Latvian Jews escaped because the general population was not sympathetic to aiding the Jews,” says William Schulman, director of the Holocaust Resource Center at Queensborough Community College. “The Germans made use of the Latvians to guard the Jews and persecute them, to send them to their death. So there are very few memoirs of survivors.”

Ratz, who is retired from the television repair business, and his American-born wife, Doris, are and trying to fill that gap in Holocaust memory.

The four years he and his father spent in labor and concentration camps and their subsequent liberation forms the basis for Ratz's newly-published memoir, “Endless Miracles” (1998; Shengold Publishers Inc.). Ratz's account caught the attention of Moshe Sheinbaum, president of Shengold Publishers, precisely because it explores episodes of the Holocaust that are not often talked about. “I've published over 70 books on the Holocaust and this is one of the most exciting,” says Sheinbaum. “Very little has been done about Riga.”

Starting with historical background about the Jewish community in Latvia, the book's emotional beginning describes the first Nazi programs in Riga that would eventually spiral into genocide. Shortly after the Germans arrived in Latvia in 1941, displacing the Russians, who had occupied Latvia just a year earlier, they created two Jewish ghettos. One was for able-bodied men, the other for women, children and the disabled. Just 14 at the time, Ratz could have stayed with his mother and younger siblings, but he decided to “take a chance,” he says, and go with his father.

This is the first of the “endless miracles” Ratz describes—fortuitous decisions that saved his life. After he and his father went to the Jewish workers' ghetto, over the course of a few weeks the Nazis executed all the women, children, elderly and disabled men from the other ghetto—including Ratz's mother and siblings—in grisly mass executions in the Rumboli Forest.

With no chance to grieve, Ratz writes, “Even our mourning was cut short. We were forced to return to work immediately under penalty of instant death.” The subsequent years are an accumulation of sorrows and terror.

Ratz and his father were first sent to Lenta, a work camp near Riga, then to Salaspils, a death camp, back to Lenta and from there to Stuthoff, another death camp,

and Burgraben. During these four years, Ratz and his father managed to stay alive by luck—for example, being in the second half of a line from which the Nazis take the first half to kill, and by what Ratz says can only be attributed to God's grace.

Unlike many survivors, who lost not only their loved ones but also their faith somewhere in the camps, Ratz's faith stayed intact. It was his belief in God that allowed him to weather those years and survive. "If I would not believe in God, I would not be alive today," he says. "By believing it, I felt I survived. God actually picked up his hand and showed me the way."

One time, that way meant masquerading as a skilled craftsman with his father so they could be eligible for a work slot in a factory near Stuthoff outside of the firing range. On another occasion, it meant stealing cigarettes from guards to trade for food from more recent arrivals who were not yet starved. The loaf of bread that was bartered for two cigarettes helped Ratz and his father ward off hunger a little longer.

Ratz links his experience during those years to that of Jews throughout history, dating back to biblical times—Jews who were persecuted and whose faith was tested. Ratz, whose Hebrew name is Isaac, says that when his father first went with him to the ghetto in Riga, his father identified with Abraham, sensing that he too was being called upon to sacrifice his son, his Isaac.

For his part, Ratz appears in the book as a latter-day Joseph. Like the biblical figure who gave food from the Egyptian storehouses to his hungry brothers during a famine, Ratz, himself weak and hungry, whenever possible retrieved food to give to people in the camps who were hovering ever closer to starvation. On one occasion, he managed to salvage scraps of food from refuse bins in a camp kitchen where he worked; another time, Ratz accidentally discovered a dead horse from which he was able to give to people what was a rare commodity in the camps: meat. "God also showed me how to help people instead of how Hitler destroyed people," Ratz explains.

In Ratz's book, the brutality of the camps springs to life most poignantly in small details that are often overlooked by historians. He tells of sand irritating his throat because the Nazis would use potatoes still caked with soil for the inmates' soup and of relishing the straw matting on the bunks in one camp because he had just come from a camp where he and three others slept on a single wooden board. And he describes his father sewing his few valuables into his hernia belt so that he would have something to trade for food when all else failed.

In 1945, when the Russians finally liberated Ratz and his father, the freedom was initially hollow. "You have to be lucky how you're liberated also," Ratz says. "To be liberated by Russians was not freedom."

Unlike the survivors liberated by Americans or British who were immediately assigned to "displaced persons" camps and given medical treatment, those freed by the Russians were left to fend for themselves. "We were all free, but we did not know what to do or where to go," Ratz writes.

The Russian zone is described by Ratz as chaotic. When it became clear the Russians were not making any arrangements to treat the sick, some newly-free Jews stole to bring those in need of medical care to a hospital. Those Germans from the camps who eluded imprisonment tried to disguise themselves as Jews so that the Russians would not capture them. Ratz chillingly recounts seeing guards from the camp, now wearing prisoners' uniforms, hiding in a crowd. Speaking to the Soviet soldiers in Russian, he pointed them out and watched as the soldiers shot them on the spot. ●

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 1645

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that immediately following the 9:30 a.m. vote on Friday, the Senate proceed to S. 1645.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

INDIAN HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT ACT AMENDMENTS

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 560, S. 1770.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1770) to elevate the position of Director of the Indian Health Service to Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services, to provide for the organizational independence of the Indian Health Service within the Department of Health and Human Services, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the immediate consideration of the bill?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Indian Affairs, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. OFFICE OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INDIAN HEALTH.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There is established within the Department of Health and Human Services the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Indian Health in order to, in a manner consistent with the government-to-government relationship between the United States and Indian tribes—

- (1) facilitate advocacy for the development of appropriate Indian health policy; and
- (2) promote consultation on matters related to Indian health.

(b) **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INDIAN HEALTH.**—In addition to the functions performed on the date of enactment of this Act by the Director of the Indian Health Service, the Assistant Secretary for Indian Health shall perform such functions as the Secretary of Health and Human Services may designate. The Assistant Secretary for Indian Health shall—

- (1) report directly to the Secretary concerning all policy- and budget-related matters affecting Indian health;
- (2) collaborate with the Assistant Secretary for Health concerning appropriate matters of Indian health that affect the agencies of the Public Health Service;
- (3) advise each Assistant Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services concerning matters of Indian health with respect to which that Assistant Secretary has authority and responsibility;
- (4) advise the heads of other agencies and programs of the Department of Health and Human Services concerning matters of Indian health with respect to which those heads have authority and responsibility; and
- (5) coordinate the activities of the Department of Health and Human Services concerning matters of Indian health.

(c) **REFERENCES.**—Reference in any other Federal law, Executive order, rule, regulation, or delegation of authority, or any document of or relating to the Director of the Indian Health Service shall be deemed to refer to the Assistant Secretary for Indian Health.

(d) **RATE OF PAY.**—

(1) **POSITIONS AT LEVEL IV.**—Section 5315 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by striking the following:

"Assistant Secretaries of Health and Human Services (6)."; and

(B) by inserting the following:

"Assistant Secretaries of Health and Human Services (7).";

(2) **POSITIONS AT LEVEL V.**—Section 5316 of such title is amended by striking the following: "Director, Indian Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services."

(e) **DUTIES OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INDIAN HEALTH.**—Section 601 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1661) is amended in subsection (a)—

(1) by inserting "(1)" after "(a)";

(2) in the second sentence of paragraph (1), as so designated, by striking "a Director," and inserting "the Assistant Secretary for Indian Health,"; and

(3) by striking the third sentence of paragraph (1) and all that follows through the end of the subsection and inserting the following: "The Assistant Secretary for Indian Health shall carry out the duties specified in paragraph (2)."

"(2) The Assistant Secretary for Indian Health shall—

"(A) report directly to the Secretary concerning all policy- and budget-related matters affecting Indian health;

"(B) collaborate with the Assistant Secretary for Health concerning appropriate matters of Indian health that affect the agencies of the Public Health Service;

"(C) advise each Assistant Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services concerning matters of Indian health with respect to which that Assistant Secretary has authority and responsibility;

"(D) advise the heads of other agencies and programs of the Department of Health and Human Services concerning matters of Indian health with respect to which those heads have authority and responsibility; and

"(E) coordinate the activities of the Department of Health and Human Services concerning matters of Indian health."

(f) **CONTINUED SERVICE BY INCUMBENT.**—The individual serving in the position of Director of the Indian Health Service on the date preceding the date of enactment of this Act may serve as Assistant Secretary for Indian Health, at the pleasure of the President after the date of enactment of this Act.

(g) **CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—

(1) **AMENDMENTS TO INDIAN HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT ACT.**—The Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.) is amended—

(A) in section 601—

(i) in subsection (c), by striking "Director of the Indian Health Service" both places it appears and inserting "Assistant Secretary for Indian Health"; and

(ii) in subsection (d), by striking "Director of the Indian Health Service" and inserting "Assistant Secretary for Indian Health"; and

(B) in section 816(c)(1), by striking "Director of the Indian Health Service" and inserting "Assistant Secretary for Indian Health".

(2) **AMENDMENTS TO OTHER PROVISIONS OF LAW.**—The following provisions are each amended by striking "Director of the Indian Health Service" each place it appears and inserting "Assistant Secretary for Indian Health";

(A) Section 203(a)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 761b(a)(1)).

(B) Subsections (b) and (e) of section 518 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1377 (b) and (e)).

(C) Section 803B(d)(1) of the Native American Programs Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 2991b-2(d)(1)).

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee substitute be agreed to; that the bill be considered read a third time